The President. Oh, I certainly hope so. I'm very interested in continuing to work in the climate change area in particular and doing what I can to convince the political systems of countries that have to participate in this that there are economically beneficial ways to do the right thing for the global environment. And in order to do that, we have to continue the basic research into alternative fuels and alternative technologies. There is no way to solve this over the long run unless you can get more growth out of fewer greenhouse gases. There is no way to do it. And so, on that alone, I will continue to be very interested.

The other thing that I'm particularly personally interested in is the breakdown of public health systems in so many countries, and how it disables them from dealing with things like the AIDS epidemic and other problems, and what we can do to sort of put that back together again. So I expect those are two areas that I'll be involved in for a long time to come, if I have the opportunity to be.

Mr. Rubinstein. Thanks very much. I hope that we can ask you some questions about it later, when you're doing those things.

The President. Thanks.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 4:20 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House for later broadcast, and the transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 21. In his remarks, the President referred to Eric Lander, director, Whitehead/MIT Center for Genome Research; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid; J. Craig Venter, founder, The Institute for Genome Research, and president and chief scientific officer, Celera Genomics Corp.; Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom; President Jiang Zemin of China; and President Jacques Chirac of France. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Action To Reduce Diesel Emissions
December 21, 2000

A year ago today I announced the toughest air pollution standards for new cars and sport utility vehicles. Today we take another bold step to clean our air. We are adopting strong new measures to dramatically reduce unhealthy and unsightly emissions from trucks and buses powered by diesel fuel. Together, these actions represent the most sweeping effort ever to protect our air and our health from the pollution caused by the vehicles we drive. They ensure that by the end of the decade, every new car, truck, and SUV in America will be up to 95 percent cleaner than those on the road today.

Today's action by the Environmental Protection Agency mandates cleaner diesel fuel and extends the latest pollution control technology to all trucks and buses for the first time. These advances will prevent not only the thick plumes of diesel exhaust all too familiar to motorists but also thousands of cases of respiratory illness and premature deaths. We will spare thousands of children and elderly the agony of asthma and bronchitis and help to fulfill the promise of clean, healthy air for every American.

For the past 8 years, Vice President Gore and I have been guided by the conviction that a strong economy and a healthy environment go hand in hand. Indeed, our Nation entered the 21st century enjoying both unprecedented prosperity and the cleanest air and water in a generation. Our actions a year ago and today will help ensure an even safer and more prosperous future for generations yet to come.

Statement on Signing the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001
December 21, 2000

Today I am signing into law H.R. 4942, the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001. I commend the Congress for approving a bill that provides critical funding for enforcing our Nation's laws, protecting our precious natural resources, promoting international peace, and supporting our diplomatic operations.

Many portions of the Act are considerably improved compared to the previous House